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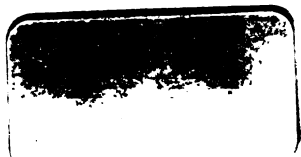
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Bob's Breaking in

Eleanor Putnam

KD61929



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BOB IS CALLED UPON TO MEET HIS DOOM.

BOB'S "BREAKING IN."

BY

ELEANOR PUTNAM.

Putnam, Boston, 1881.

(WITH OTHER STORIES BY FAVORITE AUTHORS.)



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1880.

† BOB'S "BREAKING IN."

"WHY don't you write a story, Tom?" said Jim.

"Can't," said I; "never did such a thing in my life."

You see the beginning of it all was Jim's coming home for a three months' leave. Jim's in the navy and just home from Japan. So he came to see us, and so I broke my leg. When we came home from school we had planned no end of larks for the vacation, what with the Christmas tree and sleighing and skating and coasting, and making candy over to Aunt Lewes', and going into Boston to Pinafore and having Charlotte-russe at Parker's, and all the rest.

So the first thing I did the very night after we got home, was to fall through a bad place in the stable

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floor and break my leg, and Will said it was lucky it wasn't one of the horses. Of course that finished my fun, for I could not go anywhere with the rest, but just had to lie there with my leg in splints ; and though of course I had my presents just the same, I was mad all the vacation.

It wasn't any great fun, you'd better believe, to lie on a lounge and stick in the house and see Will going everywhere and having no end of jolly times every day.

Then when the Saturday came for him to go back to Dr. Thomas's and leave me behind, and I thought of seeing all the fellows and hearing what they had for presents and all that, I concluded that if I'd been well I'd have been glad for once in my life even to go back to school. It wasn't that I didn't have enough done for me either, for mother and Jennie, the cook, almost cured me of ever liking cream cakes and jam again, by the heaps of it they gave me. Nell made me more neckties than I can wear in ten years, and played backgammon by the hour. Father brought me a new book from the city nearly every night, and Jim told me more stories — "yarns" he called them — and he and I made the most complete man-of-war that ever was seen in these parts. So you can see that I was not neglected, but I tell you there's nothing like being well and having two whole

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legs to stand on. I'd got pretty tired of reading and jig-sawing and painting, and one afternoon I'd been telling them about the time we broke Bob Richards in at school, and says Jim :

"Tom, old fellow," says he, "why don't you write a story. Write it all out, and send it for publication ; you never know what you can do till you try," says he.

I thought I couldn't at first, but the next day Jim had to drive over to Medford, and Nell had to go too to match mother's gray dress and get some red ribbons for the dog. They both went off, and mother had a caller down stairs, so I was left all alone, and that's how I came to write about it anyway.

You see our fellows have always had a fashion of giving the new boys a "breaking in." The thing began by just doubling up the bed clothes, or sewing up the fellow's sleeves, and then they got to ducking them and scaring them with ghosts, and when at last they pumped on little Fred Harris and frightened him into brain fever, Dr. Thomas forbade anything more of the sort.

Now when Dr. Thomas says anything he has a way of meaning it, so we fellows were surprised enough when one day Jeff Ryder came into the gym where we were having a circus, and said : "I tell you what

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let's do ! Let's give Bob Richards a regular breaking in ! ”

“Yes I would, Jeff,” said Harry Thorndike, in the odd, quiet way he had with him. Harry Thorndike was our head boy, and entered Harvard last summer. “Yes, I would,” says he, “and get sent home for a month ; it would be no end of fun. I would.”

Of course we boys all looked at Jeff when Harry spoke in that way, to see if he didn't feel cheap, but he didn't, a bit.

“I'll take all the blame,” says he, “and I'll risk being sent home.”

So then he told us all about his plan, and we thought it was a jolly good one too.

Bob Richards was a new fellow ; only been there four weeks ; and when he first came we thought he was a regular moon-calf. He was rather small of his age and had a kind of pinched, half-starved look, as if he'd never had a good square meal from soup clear through to pudding in his life. He was homesick and lonesome too, and we got into the way of calling him “baby” and “sissy,” but he never seemed to mind a bit, but would always help a fellow with his lessons just the same, and was first-class in any game.

One day Ralph Bixby, the bully of the school, said something about Richard's mother, and I just wish

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you could have seen that little fellow fire up.

"You say what you like about me," says he, "but don't you say anything about my mother; it won't be best for you, Bixby."

"Do you want to fight?" says Bixby, bristling up like a turkey cock.

"It is not fighting I am after," says Richards, very quietly, "but I can fight if there is need of it."

But Bixby said he wouldn't fight with an under-class man, and then went off and told Dr. Thomas that little Richards had been offering to fight. We all liked little Richards, for he was clear grit right through and no mistake. So when Jeff told us his plan we all agreed to it and there weren't more than half a dozen of us fellows that knew about it, and we didn't have to go and tell everyone about it either, as girls would.

At last the term was ended, and we were going home next day; that is, all we fellows who had any homes to go to, or any invitations to visit. But Bob Richards, he didn't have any place to go because his mother was poor and lived way down in Machias, and it was too far away. So most boys would have been ugly about it and envious of the other boys, but Richards wasn't a bit. Will and I were though, one winter when all our people were away in Germany, and

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we had to stay at the school or else go to Aunt Jocelyn's. We don't like very well to go to Aunt Jocelyn's, for she always has cold meat and rice pudding without any plums, and says that she likes to see boys sober and useful. She gave Will and me dictionaries for Christmas presents. So we'd rather go most anywhere than to Aunt Jocelyn's. But we were mad though to think we had to stay at the school, and Will told one of the fellows that he'd punch him if he didn't stop looking so glad.

Little Richards you would have thought was going himself, he looked so glad and happy, and rushed about up and down stairs into all the rooms, helping the fellows pack and cord their trunks, strap up their valises, and directing cards for their boxes, and you'd have thought he was going himself sure enough.

"Don't you wish you were going home, Richards?" said Ned Smith. He is one of those fellows who are always saying things they ought not to, though not meaning to be hateful. He'd do no end of things for a fellow who was sick, and then like as not tell him something that would make him sicker than ever. So he couldn't think of anything better to say than to ask little Richards if he didn't wish he was going home.

"Why, yes," said Bob, in the bright, quick way he

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had with him ; " why, yes, of course I wish I was going home, but if I can't I can't, so there's an end to it. Besides I'm going home next summer ; it'll only be twenty-five weeks."

Just to think of his speaking of it in that chipper way, as if he'd said twenty-five minutes instead of weeks.

The packing was all done after a while, and we were ready for an early start next morning. We had eaten our last supper, beef-steak and fried potatoes — we always have a sort of extra good supper the last night of the term. Then after supper we had a good time in Mrs. Thomas' own room, with her two babies and her cousin who played the piano for us, and by ten o'clock we were all in our rooms and the house got still.

It was eleven o'clock when we heard three mews and a scratch like a cat, which was Jeff Ryder's signal ; he could have opened the door and come in just as well, but he was always very fond of giving all kinds of signs.

We opened the door and there were Hal Thorndike and the two Everett boys and Jeff. Will and I had a room alone. We came out and joined them and went up-stairs trying to keep still, though Will would giggle, and he and Jeff had a scuffle on the landing

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about which should go in and get Bob out of bed.

At last Harry Thorndike settled it by telling them both to go. They had masks that Jeff and I made of black cloth with holes cut through for the eyes and mouth.

So they went in and waked up Bob, and said in a horrid, scarey sort of way, "Unhappy mortal! prepare to suffer your doom! Arise and proceed to the hall of judgment!"

He wasn't more than half awake, but he was clear pluck, and he came out shivering with cold and with a blanket round his shoulders.

The boys had blindfolded him, and they led him round and round till he was pretty well mixed up, and then they took him to the Hall of Judgment, which was Harry Thorndike's room.

The two younger boys staid with him while we older ones fell to work like beavers in Bob's room.

We had a hard time though you'd better believe, trying to keep quiet, for the fellows would forget every now and then and speak or laugh out loud. We had Archibald, the school janitor, up to help us, and we made quick work of what we had to do I can tell you.

To begin with, his room was just the forlornest place that ever you saw, and no mistake! We fur-

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nish our own rooms at Dr. Thomas', and we always try to fix them up rather gorgeous. Our mothers and sisters are always sending us gimcracks to make our dens kind of gay. Then if fellows happen to have any girl friends you know, they are always sending them tidies and such trash for philopene presents, and though we don't much care to have the things round under feet, somehow if one fellow has them, all the rest wants them too.

But I just wish you could have seen little Richards' room! the barest, coldest place! There was no carpet, only a common sort of rug before the little old stove, that was so wheezy and full of cracks that it would not do much but smoke anyway. There was a bedstead, and his study table with his books on it. There was a picture of his mother, and one of his sister — rather pretty she was too, with smiling eyes like Richards', and soft hair in little rings about her forehead and face. Thorndike said that she would be very pretty when she was older — say seventeen. Mrs. Thomas' cousin is sixteen and a half. Bob had put a little wreath of some kind round the two pictures. There was a plant too on the table. He brought it in his hand all the way from Machias, with a brown paper bag over the top of it, and now it was just ready to bloom.

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The first thing we did was to bring in a big warm carpet all made and fitted to the room, and we spread it down, but didn't nail it because of the noise and because we thought he'd like to do it himself. Then we covered the old table and mantle with jolly, bright cloths. We never could have picked them out in the world if it hadn't been for Mrs. Thomas' cousin, the one who played on the piano for us. She is rather nice for a girl, and sometimes wears little gold horse-shoes in her ears. Jeff Ryder is going to marry her when he is twenty-one, but nobody knows it yet, not even she. Jeff only told me one night when I had a sore throat and he slept with me. So she helped us pick out the things, and gave us a tidy, and a pin-cushion the size of a bean bag. Then we moved in a first-class stove, and Archibald set her up and built a rouser of a fire in her. We put a pair of new blankets on the bed, and Jeff Ryder brought out a student's lamp—one of the double headers; the two Belknap boys—that means Will and me—gave a big easy chair to go beside the table; then the Everett boys gave a set of book shelves; and Dr. Thomas gave a box of books, as many as a dozen I should think. We left these in the box, for Will and I always think that half the fun of having presents is opening the bundles ourselves. Harry Thorndike

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gave the stove and a little clock from his own room. We put the pin-cushion on the bureau, and the tidy on the chair, and while we were standing there looking at it all, there came the very softest kind of a step outside and there was the Doctor's wife. She had a picture in her arms, one that I had seen a good many times in her own sitting-room. It was quite a large picture of a woman with a sort of hood on her hair and a baby in her arms ; both the woman and the baby had a kind of shiny hoop just above their heads in the air, looking as if in a minute they'd drop down and make crowns. Will told me once that he thought it was a picture of Mrs. Thomas and the baby, but I think not, though there was the same kind of look too on both their faces.

"Hang this up, boys," she said ; "he is very fond of it, and I have had it for a good many years. I've babies of my own now to look at, so we will give this to Bob. Let us hang it over the mantle-piece."

There is something rather queer about the Doctor's wife. It isn't that she isn't pretty, for she is ; and it isn't that she is odd or old, for she is younger a good deal than the Doctor, and as kind and jolly as a girl ; but there is something queer about her, for I don't know how many fellows have said she seemed just like their mothers ; and what I want to know is

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how in creation can she look and seem like the mothers of so many boys — dark and light, and homely and handsome, English, German, American, and even one colored fellow said she made him think of his "mammy." I think it must be a kind of motherish way which she has, that makes us all feel so about her.

She gave the picture to Hal Thorndike and he hung it up, and I tell you the room did look just immense.

Then we went down stairs and brought Bob up again, and sat him down in his new chair, and told him not to take off his blinder till he'd counted three hundred, and then we all ran down into Will's and my room to wait and see what he would do. We rather expected to hear him shout, or tear round, or do something or other ; but we counted three hundred two or three times over, and not a sound came from his room.

By and by Jeff said he was going up to see what the row was — which was only his way of speaking , for you couldn't call it a row, could you, when there wasn't a sound to be heard !

Jeff didn't come back, and then Will said he'd go and see where Jeff was, so Hal said it was like Clever Alice and her cheeses that she sent rolling down hill

Bob's "Breaking In."

after each other ; but at last the two boys came back, not grinning at all, but solemn and long-faced enough.

"I guess he's mad," said Jeff ; "anyhow he can't be glad, for he's howling !" which was another of Jeff's ways of speaking ; for Bob certainly was not howling.

"I don't see what he wants to act that way for," said Will. "I bet I wouldn't if I had so many things given to me at once !"

"You can't always tell," said Hal. "It isn't always a sign a fellow is mad if he howls. I howled like a good one when my father came home from sea, when I was a little fellow, a good many years ago."

"Let's go up and see what's the matter with him," said I.

"Let's go to bed !" said Harry. "Don't one of you young rats go near his room to-night, or I'll report you to the Doctor !"

We all laughed, for of course we knew he'd never report us ; he isn't that kind ; but we minded what Hal said all the same, as everybody has a way of doing, and we didn't hear a sound more till morning, and the gong waked us up.

And then there was Archibald at the door to help with the trunks and boxes, and the lamps were lighted in the dining-room, and there were fritters and

Bob's "Breaking In."

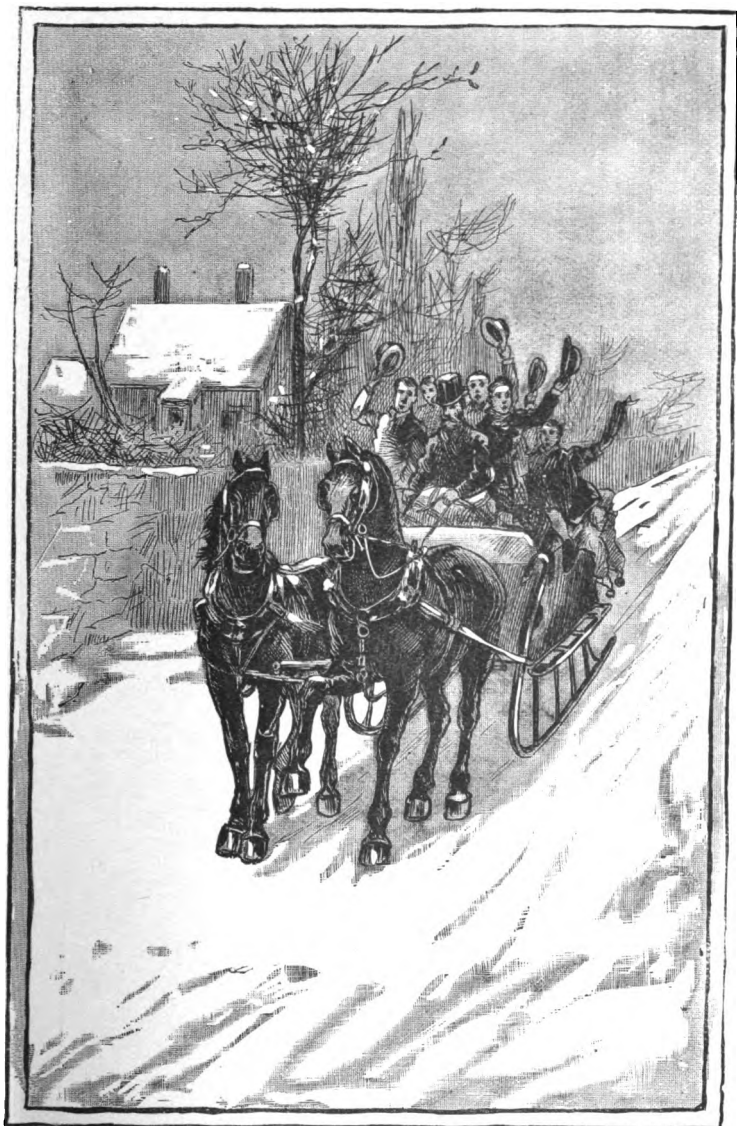
syrup for breakfast, but they were too hot to eat. Then there was Jeff Ryder with a present for the Doctor's wife's cousin — some candy in a jolly, silver box, lined with blue silk (Jeff will spend all his quarter's money on one thing), and there in a dark corner of the stairs was the cousin herself, with a little pink sack on, crying about something, and Harry Thorndike was leaning on the balusters saying, as I came along, "Why Anette, child, it's only for two weeks anyhow! Come, don't send me off this way; can't you wish me a merry Christmas?"

Then they shouted that the big sleigh was ready, and I thought we were going to get off without having to see Bob at all.

So I rushed out through the hall and down the slippery steps, but there was Bob before me, very white in the face, and with his eyes looking more than ever like his sister's.

I tell you we fellows felt awful cheap; a sight cheaper than Bob did himself. Jeff Ryder whispered to me that he was going to bolt, but it was no go. Bob stepped right in front of us.

"Boys," said he; "boys, you must let me — if I only could tell you — if you only knew —" and just then Hal Thorndike came along (the cousin had



HURRAH FOR HOME AND CHRISTMAS !

Bob's "Breaking In."

run away up-stairs) and set things right as he has a way of doing.

"All right, youngster," he said; "we know just what you want to say — no one who looked at you could accuse you of being ungrateful. Let up now, old fellow, don't say a word more, but go up to my room and see if I left my watch-key on the bureau."

Bob ran off, and Harry said, "now cut for it, fellows!" says he; "hip, vamoose, get, pile into the sleigh, or he'll be back again, thanking you worse than ever!"

So in we jumped, the whip cracked, the bells jingled, and we gave three cheers for the Doctor, and three more for his wife, and then we dashed away.

Of course, little Richards wrote to us, but a letter isn't half so bad as to have a fellow brace right up and thank you before your face and eyes. So we got out of it pretty well after all, didn't we?

And this is all there is about "Bob's 'Breaking In,'" and not much of a story either to write all out and send to a publisher. But you see Jim told me to, and it was lonesome with Jim and Nell and mother gone, and only the cat for company the whole afternoon.

+ FARMING ON A SMALL SCALE.

ONE rainy day while three little girls and their brother were ransacking the garret, they came upon an immense pile of picture-papers—a mine of wealth to these inventive little people, for the papers were filled with pictures of horses, cows, chickens and pigs.

As soon as their eyes rested on these pictures an idea seemed to strike two of the children at once. They smiled, and said in a chorus, "Let's do it."

"What?" asked Nan.

"Cut out all the horses, pigs, chickens and cows, and make a little farm," said Bud.

So Alice ran down to her mother's room, and having gained her consent she ran back with a whole collection of scissors, and then was off again to make some flour-paste.

Then began the preparations for farming. First, all the horses were carefully cut out, leaving enough paper at their feet to turn under, just as paper-dolls

Farming on a Small Scale.

are made, in order to make them stand ; the cows, chickens and pigs underwent the same operation. Then Alice came up with the paste, which was made with flour stirred up in a tin cup with cold water, put on the stove to boil, and hot water added as it thickened.

All the animals were pasted on cardboard cut to fit them, always having enough beneath their feet to turn under. And then the little stock-owners contemplated their work with great satisfaction : here were cattle enough to stock a whole farm.

How to house them was the next question.

"We ought to have a stable," said Nan, sitting on a bag of rags which were waiting for some rag-man to come along.

"I'll tell you," cried Alice ; "a satin gloss starch-box would be just the thing. I saw one down in the kitchen, empty, the other day : come on, and we'll get it."

So off they ran helter skelter down-stairs, and into the kitchen to secure their barn, after which they again mounted to the garret to begin operations anew.

First having found the hammer and nail-box, Bud got two nice pieces of very thin board and made a pointed roof on the starch-box. The inside of the box he divided off into stalls with strips of cardboard,

Farming on a Small Scale.

while the little girls made small cotton bags which they filled with corn, oats and beans. Then they went out to papa's barn and got some hay and tied it up in small bundles ; then they put the bags and hay up in the top of the barn.

While Bud made a harness out of cord, Alice got one of mamma's spool-boxes and four empty spools ; then cutting a piece of stick very thin she sewed it under the box, leaving enough sticking out on each side to put the spools on. She had two sticks, one on each end of the box, and then put some small tacks on the outer edge to keep them from coming off.

Then she fastened two pieces of wood on the spool-box for shafts, finding the kindlings used for making fires very nice for the purpose.

By that time Bud's harness was finished, and the little girls looked on in rapt attention while he harnessed the horse to the shafts. Tat, who was the youngest, was delighted, and got her paper-dolls right away, and seated them in the model farm-wagon, where they had a very nice and jolly ride.

Such a perfectly delightful time as they did have. They planted corn and peas in the cracks of the garret-floor, and the chickens were fed, and so were the horses and cows ; and the paper-dolls had many a fine ride on horse-back much to their pain I should

Farming on a Small Scale.

suppose, since the only way to keep them on was by a cruel pin stuck through them and down into the horse's back.

The children played there all day, and when night came bringing their papa, such a glowing description as he and mamma got of their little farm, and nothing would satisfy them until both went up to see it, which they did, and immediately pronounced it

"SPLENDID !"

Posie.

+ POSIE.

POSIE lies under the big apple-tree, among the clover blossoms, her pink-and-white, daisy-like face, with its tangles of yellow curls, resting on her chubby hands, her blue eyes roving like the honey-bees from flower to flower :

“How happy are our *eyes* !
How *happy* are our eyes !
How happy are our eyes !”

So hums Posie to herself (it is a line from a little poem that she has lately read, and that sticks in her memory like a raisin in a bun).

A cat-bird in the thicket close by mews, and Posie answers it ; then a humming-bird darts almost into her face ; next a chipping-sparrow alights in the flower-bed within reach of her hand, and Posie watches it hopping among the plants until a robin comes and drives it away.



UNDER THE BIG APPLE-TREE.

Posie.

“Naughty thing !” cries Posie, and frightens away the robin.

The day is warm, the clover-bed soft and sweet, and pretty soon Posie’s yellow head slips from her hands to the ground, and there she is sound asleep among the clover-blooms.

Now Posie has no business to be asleep under the green and gold canopy of the old apple-tree ; she ought to be helping her sister Patty weed the flower-beds.

But Patty works away by herself in the hot sun, and Posie sleeps in the shade.

It is fine growing weather, and this is Monday morning, so the weeds have got a good start ; for, as Patty often says : “ Weeds never rest Sundays nor any other day, nor nights either.”

Patty takes a very practical view of weeds and things in general. She stands now, a sturdy little body, with hands clasping her plump waist, hat pushed off her flushed face, looking over her morning’s work.

“ I guess I will get the shears now and clip the borders,” she says, with a sigh of content, for cutting grass is Patty’s favorite garden-work, and she always leaves it to the last so as to give her whole mind to it.

But the shining shears have hardly got a taste of

Posie.

the juicy green grass when Aunt Martha calls the children to come to dinner. Her voice wakes Posie, who rubs her eyes sleepily as she growls :

“Dear me, Patty, is it dinner-time?”

“Yes, and come along, Posie. Aunt Martha’s standing in the door looking for us.”

And the little girls both run along, for Aunt Martha is very strict. The little girls do not talk much at table, either, for Aunt Martha has some rather old-fashioned ideas ; one is that children should be seen and not heard. After dinner Posie and Patty wash up the dishes under Aunt Martha’s eye, and a sharp black eye it is too ; and after the dishes are all washed and set away, the crumb-cloth shaken out where the sparrows can get the crumbs, and the dish-cloths washed and laid on the grass, the little sisters go to their own room to “tidy themselves up ;” for no matter what happens they must change their dress every afternoon, though there is very little difference in their gowns, which are very simple and quite plain. But, as Aunt Martha says, “habit is everything ;” and if she despises anything upon the face of the earth, it is a slattern ; and if all little girls were trained from their cradles to habits of neatness and order, there would not be any slovenly women.

Which all sounds very sensible, and very likely is

Posie.

sound doctrine. But, as all little girls do not have Aunt Marthas to train them up, it is highly probable that there will always be a few slatterns left in the world.

Aunt Martha also believes in a place for everything and everything in its place, and a time for everything and everything in its time. The time for gardening is the morning; and the little sisters would no more dream of touching a hoe or pulling a weed in the afternoon than they would of going to bed in their shoes and stockings.

The next morning they are in the garden together again as usual. Patty goes to work right away; but Posie feels so discouraged when she looks at the weeds in her beds, "as if there had been two Sundays together," that she can not bear to begin, so she sits and watches Patty awhile. Then a splendid butterfly, that looks as if made out of a piece of a rainbow, sails slowly by. Posie tosses away her hoe and gives chase.

You all know how a butterfly will draw one on. Every minute you think you are just going to catch it, but, somehow, you never do quite. So it happens to Posie. She chases that butterfly over half the garden, through a corner of the orchard, and so on down to the meadow. Here it suddenly flies

Posie.

high up in the air, and is out of sight in a moment.

Never mind ! here are the spring-run and the willows and — yes ! yonder is little Gypsy Dilks, bare-headed, bare-legged, wading in the run.

“Hillo, Posie ! that you ? Where’s Patty ? ”

“Why, Gypsy Dilks ! does your granny ’low you to wade in the water like that ? ”

“Course she does. Granny knows I won’t melt. I ain’t sugar nor salt.”

And Gypsy splashes about and sends the water in a shower of diamonds over the willows and water-weeds, while the hot little butterfly-hunter, fanning herself with her hat, looks on with admiration and envy.

“Take off your shoes and stockings, and come in ! Nobody won’t never know,” says Gyp, splashing up and down.

Posie is so warm, and the water looks so cool, the shoes and stockings come off, and then — there she is, paddling in the pebbly brook with Gypsy.

After playing in the water until they are tired, they hunt wild strawberries in the meadow grass, until Gypsy’s little brother Teddy comes to call her to help catch the pig.

“You’d better hurry up, Gypsy, for granny’s awful mad ’bout you goin’ off, anyway, and leavin’

Posie.

the gate open. And the pig's rooted up most all granny's posy-beds, an' run clean off into the woods!"

And Teddy turns a somersault, and then walks off on his hands, with his heels in the air.

Posie goes home in time for dinner, and Aunt Martha supposes she has been at work in the garden all the morning; for Patty does not tell — Aunt Martha despises a tell-tale among "little women," as heartily as she does a slattern among "grown-ups." Besides, Patty loves her little sister too well to wish to get her into trouble.

But in the night Posie has a bad attack of her old enemy, the croup. And after she has gone through a hot mustard bath, and has poultices of lard and snuff on her chest, and swallowed ever so many doses of squills, she confesses to the wading in the cold spring-run, the butterfly chase, and the nap under the apple-tree of the day before; besides sun dry other peccadilloes with which we have nothing to do. And then she has to lie and hear Aunt Martha groan over them all.

Well, Posie has to stay indoors for a fortnight; then, one dry afternoon, she is allowed to go into the garden. And what a sight meets her eyes!

Her little beds — one heart-shaped and planted

Posie.

with heart's-ease, one a half-moon and filled with blue nemophila, and one round raised bed of double portulacca, gold and white and rose, and a long border, with a little bit of everything in it — where are they?

Alas ! they are so overgrown with weeds that the very shapes of the beds have vanished. Hardly a flower is to be seen. And when one does peer through the tanglewild, it looks so forlorn that it is a pity to see it. Poor Posie sits down under the apple-tree, and covers her face with her hands to shut out the hateful sight.

“Don't cry, Posie, you may have half of my flowers. See how many there are ! I wanted to weed your garden, but Aunt Martha would not let me.”

And little soft-hearted Patty hugs and kisses her little sister.

“Yes, Posie, Patty wished very much to work your garden, but I forbade her to touch it. I hoped the loss of your flowers might teach you a useful lesson !” says Aunt Martha, who has followed the children into the garden.

Posie's punishment grew almost more than she could bear, for Aunt Martha would not allow her to pull up a single weed. And there they grew and

Possie.

flourished all summer long — those ugly, ugly weeds — a constant reminder to the pleasure-loving little girl of her “butterfly-ways,” as Aunt Martha calls her flitting from one thing to another, and leaving her tasks half done.

The Piecing of the Blocks.

THE PIECING OF THE BLOCKS.

“**N**OW it's your turn to guess, Bossy.”

“Well, Flossy,” said the little sister, upturning her chubby face and gray eyes to the half-window far up under the house roof, “‘I guess’ there are lots and lots of nice things in the top of the house: china dolls, and jointed dolls, and clay images, and fruit cake, and kid shoes, and —”

“That's enough. You've guessed five, and that's all our turn is. It's my turn, now. ‘I guess’ there's white hats with white feathers, and blue shoes, and barrels of candy and oranges, and tea-sets, china, and wood, and pewter —”

“Stop, stop, Floss! You're guessing ever so much more than your turn. You've said seven!”

“I have not either. I said hats and feathers — that's one; feathers on the hats — and blue shoes — that's two — and barrels of candy and oranges — that's three —”

“No! no! that's four! Candies and oranges ar'n't

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one ; and you said china, and wood, and pewter — that's seven ! I'm going to guess six, too. There's a rocking-horse up there ; a beautiful, spotted one, big as a pony, with a nice red saddle on."

"*Two !*" said Floss.

"*One !*"

"No. Pony is one, and a saddle is two."

"But you said 'hats with feathers on,' and I let you."

"But I won't let you have a pony with a saddle on. It's too much for one."

Boss turned away with quivering lip.

"I won't play 'guess things' in the garret any more. I did think of lots of nice things you would have liked to have heard, but now I'm going to find dandelions."

"So am I," said Floss, secretly discomfited. "I'll find the most !"

"O !" Both of them suddenly uttered this exclamation and looked towards the large gate, for entering it was an old buggy drawn by a fat white horse. Up the lane it came, and stopping beside the horse-block the driver, who was a woman, bent forward and beckoned to the children.

"Girls, come here — or stop — Flossy, run right into the house and tell your father Mrs. Flint has

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come to spend the afternoon. Bossy, come this way and take my bag."

Floss darted with alacrity around the house, but Bossy lagged somewhat as she approached the block.

"How do you do, child?" said the new-comer, stepping out and dusting her crisp, black gown. "Here, take the bag. Are you glad to see me?"

Bossy crimsoned and looked away; then she put a stubby little finger in her mouth and swung the satchel awkwardly around. A weed near by caught her eyes — was it a buttercup? O dear! why did not Flossy and father come? Somehow she felt so rude, but she was not truly glad to see Mrs. Flint, and what could she do? O dear, dear!

"You are a very ill-mannered child," said Mrs. Flint, frowning. "You actually grow worse as you grow older. Ah, there comes your father! Dominie, how do you do?"

A faint smile flickered over her austere face as the young minister, called from his study and his sermon, came cheerfully to meet his parishioner. She liked her pastor; and now, looking at his pale face, said, solicitously, 'that he hadn't much color, and she was afraid he was overworking himself.' Then, marshaling the children, she started for the house.

"Have you found your tongue and manners, yet?" she said, severely, to Bossy. "My Caroline —"

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Boss hung her head and Floss tossed hers somewhat defiantly, both conscious that, as usual, Mrs. Flint's daughter, "My Caroline," was to be the moral glass, in comparison with which all their shortcomings were to be pitilessly contrasted. They knew her as a pale-faced, meek-eyed young lady to whom they were never attracted in the slightest ; but, more than all, they knew from her mother's often repeated sayings what a very good, proper child she had always been. She never lost her temper, never ran with her bonnet off, never tore or dog-eared her books, never made mud pies, never cried over her lessons, never even wanted to play on Sunday, never put her finger in her mouth, never broke her toys — never, never, till the list of nevers crushed them, and made their shortcomings loom up mountain-high.

"My Caroline never was rude when spoken to ; she always answered prettily. Sometimes she made a courtesy ; not a bob, but a courtesy. You would never have seen her put her fingers in her mouth, or shift awkwardly on one foot, or refuse to answer like some children I know."

The listening children hung their heads guiltily. On the door-step they paused, looked back, but Mrs. Flint pushed them on.

"Run in," she said.

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They cast saddened glances at each other. O green grasses, with the red clovers and the humming, honey-sucking bees! O tempting bed of soft, white sand under the hill, with rows of oyster-shells, yet empty of dirt pies, ranged around! O purple thistle and sticky milk-weed growing on the hill-side! O little brown ants, crawling in single file across the straw Boss and Floss have given you for a royal highway! O winds whispering in the maples! O fleecy cloudlets dreamily sailing in the blue expanse of sky!—good-by, one and all, for Mrs. Flint has come, and is surely determined that the children shall do her bidding the remainder of the lovely afternoon.

Mrs. Flint shakes hands solemnly with their mother, then proceeds to doff her hat and duster.

“Stop,” she says, as her hostess starts to carry them into the near bed-chamber, “don’t you do it. Let the children do it. Bring them up to save you all the steps possible. Flossy, carry my bonnet carefully, and be sure and lay it on the side. You should wait, without telling, on your mother. My Caroline early learned to wait on me with despatch and cheerful willingness.”

Little baby Curly, sleeping in her wicker cradle, is disturbed by the high-keyed voice and opens her

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winsome eyes. Seeing Mrs. Flint, and recognizing



MRS. FLINT AND BABY CURLY.

in her only another human whom there is no necessity of fearing, she stretches out her two rosy dimpled arms. Mrs. Flint does not favor babies much, but the woman in her heart can hardly ignore the appeal, and she stoops and lifts the pretty creature from her nest.

“How she grows,” she says, quite at a loss for the endearing, loving epithets generally applied to babies. “But what a

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pity that she is a girl ! A boy now, can make his own way in the world, but I must say three girls are a drag on a poor minister."

Floss and Boss, hearing this, are secretly indignant ; but sweet Curly, unconscious of her need of compassion, pats Mrs. Flint's hard features caressingly, then attempts to pull off her cap.

The children laugh heartily at this innocent temerity, but Mrs. Flint looks sternly at them. "Unseasonable levity is disagreeable," she says in austere tones. They hardly understand the words, but are bright enough to know that she means they must stop laughing ; but this they cannot do in an instant.

Plainly, they are very naughty to-day. Mrs. Flint says so as she gives Curly to her mother, sits down in the large rocker, and orders Floss to bring her a foot-stool. Then, opening her bag, she takes out a half-knit mitten.

"My rule is : be systematic and do work in season," she says, adjusting her needles. "Like the ants, lay up in summer for winter. Slackness in anything I despise. My Caroline has been trained on this system, and your little girls, Mrs. Hammett, should be also. Think of the patchwork quilts they can have pieced by the time they are grown up and

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need setting out. I must say I think they spend too much time out of doors, doing nothing but getting as dirty and brown as little beggars. Now, I never allowed my Caroline to run out of doors at all times and seasons, and when she went out for a walk she wore a veil to keep from freckling, and was as careful as an elderly person of her clothes.

“Now, children, get your patchwork, and bring your chairs and sit down one on each side of me. I sha’n’t mind the trouble if I can only learn you to sew neatly. Not every child has some one to show her. Think of the poor heathen who never are taught. What? Not know where to find your thimbles—asking your mother if she has seen them? My Caroline had a straw work-basket, with one pocket in it for thread, one for her thimble, and another for tapes, and a little morocco case for needles, and she kept things in their places. She never cried: ‘Mother, have you seen my thimble? Do you know where I can get a needle?’ She never spent time hunting for lost or mislaid things; simply because, as I taught her, she had a place for everything and everything in its place, and her basket, when not in use, stood in my bedroom on the stand under the looking-glass.”

O, what humiliated little beings, at the close of these

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sternly delivered words, come meekly bringing small rocking-chairs and a green box and, giving the box into her hands, subduedly sit down, one on each side of Mrs. Flint; for it is true that mother has had to aid them in their search for the thimbles, and has found Flossy's in her tea-set box and Bossy's on the window-sill, where she left it yesterday when she made a tuck in Jemima Matilda's skirt.

However, they know that when Mrs. Flint opens the box she cannot complain of untidiness; for she will find the patchwork neatly placed, Flossy's blocks on one side, and Bossy's on the other. And what stories those little squares of calico could tell her, if they could find voice to utter the experiences stitched into them! These blocks of cream-color, with delicate, feathery sprays marking them, were pieced one day when the children's world was brimmed with pleasure. Seated by mother's side they merrily prattled as they set every stitch with painstaking care, and, although when finished their best was far from perfection, still she called it good, and when they showed their handiwork to father, he straightway clapped his hands, applaudingly, and called them "lady-bugs."

And all these blocks of pink and white—why, they pieced these under grandma's supervision—

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dear, charming grandma, with her lovely face softly framed by her snowy cap, and her tender, mild ways. Her visit from her far-off home was a wonderful epoch in their lives, and between the rides, and the visits, and the company in her honor, they found time to sew a little for her.

These squares of white and black — fitly might the black mark them, for something had gone wrong in their play that day and they carried their unpleasant feelings to their sewing hour. Then Floss, to be aggravating, called Bossy's knots "perfect sights," and Boss, ruffling like an enraged hen, said they were better than she could make, whereat, up went Flossy's too-ready hand and gave a stinging slap on Bossy's round cheek ; and Boss, entirely unmindful of her morning's verse, 'to do good for evil,' swiftly returned the blow. And then, there was much sobbing and angry recrimination, till mother interfered and mingled reproof with reprimand. Truly these blocks might well have been of a uniform blackness, had not their white been typical of the repentance and confession that followed, like the sun after thunder clouds.

But Mrs. Flint simply passed them, one by one, under her spectacles, finding an amount of fault with them that was disproportionate to their size. Then

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she grimly proceeded to cut some blocks out of blue and white calico for the afternoon's work, and, having apportioned to each child her share, kept vigilant eyes upon them as they began to sew. She had a number of minute rules as to how they should sit, how they should hold their work, and continually called out to them that they were puckering the cloth, or taking too loose stitches, or too deep ones. Bossy's clumsy knots met with the criticism such efforts deserved.

"Such a lump," said she, severely, holding up in full view the thread with its offending finis. "Do you, for one instant, think I ever would have allowed my Caroline to make a thing like that?"

Bossy cringes and tries to smile, but the quiver of her lip makes the effort pitiful. She did try to make a good knot, but the slight of doing it has not come to her yet. It is so hard for her to rightly loop the thread around her finger, subtly manœuvre the thumb against it, and slip it off a dainty finish. It is a cloudy looking lump indeed, something excessively clumsy, but it is her best. She experiences a choking sensation in her throat, but essays to keep down her wounded feelings.

Flossy's vigilant eyes see the little sister's suppressed heavings of the chest, the glitter of tears on

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her black lashes, and her magnanimous soul is aflame. *She* can cast aspersions on Bossy's knots if she chooses so to do, but Mrs. Flint shall not, and with a defiant toss of her curls she says :

"Don't you scold my sister at all ! She makes them just as good as she can !"

After this explosive speech silence reigns for a moment. Still, the world does not seem jarred to its foundations ; the blue fly buzzes on the window pane, the clock continues to sound its ticks with methodical regularity, and Curly spats her hands as vigorously at nothing as ever. But O, the stern, steely eyes Mrs. Flint turns on the offender, the withering tones with which she utters the rebuke :

"My Caroline never showed such a wicked temper in her life — and you, a child brought up to better things !"

Flossy's rebellious spirit is quelled ; she meekly attends to her task. But, out of doors, all the "green things growing" are mutely calling them, and the play houses are untenanted, and the dollies prone in motherless woe in the leafy bower. It is too bad, too bad ; and hurt feelings swell so in each small bosom that every stitch is set in bitterness.

By and by, something Mrs. Flint is saying in her measured tones attracts their attention, and from that instant they are eager, fascinated listeners. She

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is talking about Horace Crandall, Uncle Horace, as they in their fondness call him. Young and bonny Horace, with his stalwart form, waving hair, and genial blue eyes. He it is who takes them on his knees when they go visiting at his father's farmhouse, and plays for them harmonious airs on the flute; he, who swings them high on his brawny shoulders and carries them down to the daisied meadow to see the sheep and the frisking lambs; he, who puts them on the back of old Moll, the veteran horse, turned out to clover for the rest of her natural life; he, who dives into capacious pockets and brings forth for their regaling, sugar plums, white and red. And is it, can it be he, of whom Mrs. Flint is so pitilessly saying: "He is a perfect brute when intoxicated"? Had the sun fallen from the sky they could not have been more confounded! He—their Horace!

Mrs. Flint, in her recital, suddenly catches the eager look of a pair of child-eyes and pauses, remembering too late the proverbial "big ears of little pitchers." With the reprimand, "Why are you not tending to your work?" she bends forward and takes from Bossy's nerveless hands the almost finished block. She inspects it critically, and holds it up with withering scorn.

"Begun with *such* a knot, all drawn and puckered

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in places, and the last part of it actually not fit to be seen. Rip it out, immediately!"

But Boss can bear no more, and dropping everything she runs to that dear refuge, her mother's lap, and buries her face in it in a perfect storm of weeping. Floss rises and glares at Mrs. Flint, then bursts into angry tears. Plainly something needs righting, so thinks their father as he comes into the room to have a chat with his parishioner, and is confronted with the perplexing scene.

"Run out of doors, girlies," he says, seeing they are past reasoning with just now. "Run out and play. There-there! what is there to cry about? Be my little women."

He puts on their sun-hats, takes them to the door, and closes it after them, then comes pleasantly back to Mrs. Flint.

"It takes a Solomon to understand children's moods," he says, "and I am afraid that no one but papa can see at times much good in his little girls; but we have to be patient and make allowances. And now, I want to hear how you succeeded planting that new hop-field."

The hop-field lies very near her heart, and she is anxious to talk it over; but she would hardly be human did she forbear saying something about naughty children, well-deserved whippings, too much leniency, and unappreciated self-sacrifice.

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But, happily for their feelings, the children, out of sight and hearing, are walking side by side in the orchard and sobbingly recounting their woes. Luckily, however, the griefs of childhood, though poignant, are not generally lasting, and their father, coming in search of them a while later, looks silently through the bushes and sees a circle-composed of Boss and the dollies, while Floss stands in the centre, her features primly drawn.



FLOSS AND BOSS.

"I am determined that you shall piece blocks nicely," she says, with a portentous frown. "You are just the carelessst, naughtiest children I ever knew, worse than heathen children, for nobody ever taught them. Rip every stitch out, this minute, and do it all over, and make teenty knots, or I'll punish you. My Caroline made better ones when she was a baby!"

The round doll-faces remain impassive, but Bossy's breaks into an amused smile as she meets Flossy's eyes, and the minister smiles, too, as he goes quietly away and leaves them undisturbed.

+ HOW AMY VISITED THE SCHOOL.

AMY was in the primary school, and she didn't like it. In fact, to use Amy's own expression, she "hated it superbly." You may not exactly understand this expression. No more would Amy, if called upon to give a definition. She had probably heard some grown-up person talk about disliking something supremely.

To tell the truth, this little primary school-girl called Amy Brink for short, but whose real name was Amelia Brinkerhoff, was forever picking up words and phrases that other people dropped, and using them as if she knew their meaning. Her teacher called her "precocious," too bright, too forward for her years. Amy heard it and repeated it as "ferocious," and feeling sure that it was some sort of a compliment, was as well satisfied with that word as any other.

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How this little primary school-girl did long to wear trains, and kid gloves, and do up her hair in a French twist — the short, fluffy, golden hair that stood out all over her dear little head — and to go to the grammar school with the large girls, to study “physiology,” whatever that was.

Little Amy had some reasons for dissatisfaction with the present state of her affairs. She did not get along very well with her lessons. She was not fond of her little, brown spelling-book, or the little green reader. All her “contention,” as she called it, was given to the large girls who came to visit the school. They had been primaries too, only a year before ; now they sat on the platform with the teacher, “just like the remittee men,” and were very “substantial and eminent,” her way of disposing of “satisfied” and “elegant.” Poor little Amy Brink ! She found it such hard work to wait for the years to go by and bring the time when she could get out of her little yellow chair, with its book-rack, into a seat before a real desk with a lid to lift up, and a glass inkstand.

One day, a sudden idea entered little Amy’s troubled, golden head. *Why couldn’t she visit the school like the other girls ?* On one occasion she had rushed into her mother’s presence, and quite out of

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breath with delight had informed her that she had just been "remoted." Mrs. Brinkerhoff knew that her little daughter meant to say that she had been promoted, but was unable to understand how that could be, as she had only entered the new class a week before.

"My dear," said she, "you mean that you have been promoted, but I think you must be mistaken."

"No, mamma," said Amy with great earnestness, "I'm not mrstaken" — "mrs." was grander than "miss" to the little girl, who used it with an emphasis which made her mother laugh, as she corrected her — "I am not mrstaken, and I guess a little girl can be remoted backwards, can't she?" And then Mrs. Brinkerhoff understood that Amy had been put back into her old class.

Now the small, golden head had conceived an idea which, carried out, would certainly result in the best kind of "remotion," or at least, so it seemed to Amy. She kept her secret, however, and one day, when mamma was away shopping, the little girl went home to luncheon in the noon recess, and put her idea into execution. The servants were busy, and Amy had everything her own way.

"I don't think much of your lunch, Ann," she remarked with all the dignity of a very dignified woman,

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while she looked very cunning and comical as she slipped out of her high chair ; “ those eggs were not boiled deficiently ” — she meant, of course, sufficiently — “ and the rolls are very dissolutely tasteful.” It is fair to suppose that she meant “ absolutely tasteless,” an expression which had once struck her as remarkably fine when she heard her father apply it to a pudding which had not been salted.

With this parting remark to Ann, and with a face of the greatest gravity, Amy walked slowly from the room, and as soon as she was out of sight, hurried as fast as her little feet could carry her to her mamma’s room. Then she locked the doors and went to work with a will, and she had a good deal in her little, plump, dimpled body.

You ought to have seen her ! Closets, bureau-drawers, bandboxes and jewel-boxes were ransacked, and then the little lady proceeded to array herself. The first thing she did was to coax that short, shining hair into as much of a twist as possible, though the ends would stick out, in the most “ aggregated ” manner, and the hairpins all seemed to consider it an excellent joke. Her mother’s cashmere skirt, with two rows of kilt plaiting around the bottom, and a loop to hold it up by, was the next thing to which she gave her mind. She always “ demired ” kilts, they

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were so "automatic" as she called aristocratic — and she remembered hearing some one say that cashmere was more becoming than silk, because it clung to the figure and had a more graceful droop. A "graceful droop" had been one of Amy's strongest desires ever after. Now, she would "droop" to her heart's content. The skirt was pretty long, and heavy, but Amy was sure she could get along with a little management, though she called it "banishment," and thought it meant the same thing. The dolman troubled her a good deal. If she had felt sure which was top and which was bottom, she would have been more at ease in her mind, but its queer shape and its mass of lace and fringe was quite bewildering. She hesitated between that and a scarlet shawl, with a longing desire for the "real camel's hair one" her mother had worn herself, and as she expressed it, "couldn't reside which of the two raiments was the most stylish and dutible." But the dolman was finally selected, and put on upside down, with the most enormous quantity of material lapping over the front. This last difficulty was remedied, however, by the folds being gathered up by a big Scotch pebble breastpin, and somewhat concealed by the heavy chain and locket which she disposed around her neck. The French twist was not quite

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big enough to pin the hat to, the lace strings were "very bothersome," and the feather tickled her neck ; but the hat, as a whole, pleased her very well.

"Now," thought Amy, standing on a hassock the better to survey herself in the mirror, and particularly struck by the grand appearance of the locket, "that is just as becoming as mamma's real gold watch and gratelaine !" Such a funny looking little girl — that dear, dimpling Amy Brink, her eyes shining with satisfaction, as she looked at herself in the big glass !

But the time was slipping by, and she was obliged to hurry in her choice of gloves, selecting at last a pair of lavender ones, with four buttons, though she privately thought in her difficulty in fastening them, that one was "a great plenty." They did wrinkle too, as she thought kid gloves could never wrinkle in this world. But there was no time left in which to grieve over this last matter, though it really distressed her a good deal, so seizing a big Russia leather fan, and her mother's gilt-scent bottle, which hung from her finger by a little chain, she "resided" that she was all ready for her afternoon's enjoyment.

The skirt was not easy to carry along, "it was so sort of wobbly and aggregating," but the thought of the kilt plaiting, and the droop helped her a good



AMY AT LAST ACHIEVES DIGNITY.

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deal. The fringe of the dolman was "just awful fussy," and in her trouble with it, she forgot the skirt, and the droop got very muddy indeed a good ways up the back. Before she reached the end of the block, she had dropped the fan and broken it. She felt that things were fast growing more "aggregated" than ever, and remarked to her small self, as if trying to derive some comfort from the long words, that "circumstances were very miscellaneous," as they usually are.

It was a droll little visitor that climbed up to the platform and settled herself in one of the big chairs. After a few pulls at the skirt it was satisfactorily arranged, so as to show the "automatic" kilts to the best advantage. The dear child saw nothing of the mud on the back. If she had, it would have distressed her very much more than it does some "real grown-up" ladies, who think they are nicer and wiser than Amy. It was a warm afternoon, and she had walked fast, therefore the broken fan had to do duty, though it was pretty hard work for the fan and the dressed-up little girl. It quite troubled her, too, the necessary display of the wrinkly gloves, and "were all real kid gloves so sticky?" she wondered.

So with a rather worn look upon her chubby face, and sitting as tall, and straight as possible, she

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waited for the teacher. The scholars came in, singly and in groups, the boys flinging their caps at each other, the girls, "with a hop, skip, and a jump," until, catching sight of Amy, they each stopped, looked, looked harder, and then laughed outright. Poor Amy looked back again, very gravely and sternly. What did it mean? They never laughed at other visitors, and she was ever so much more dressed-up than the most of them. She fanned herself harder than ever, and wished the teacher would come. Then it would be all right, though what was wrong she hadn't the least idea. It couldn't be the kilt plaiting at any rate ; but she began to wish she had worn the red shawl instead of that fussy dolman. Her face grew hot as a big boy passed her, stopped looked — oh, dear, what *were* they all looking at? — and said, "I guess we think we're just some, don't we?"

She didn't know what he meant, though the words were all short, but it made her very uncomfortable. She was so glad to see in the doorway the pleasant face of her teacher, that she actually gave a little cry of delight, and a moment after was quite at her ease again.

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Alpha ; I've come to visit the school." Here she used the scent-bottle as

How Amy Visited The School.

gracefully as she knew how, and really did it very well. "I am innocented in the course of education," she added, having heard one of the "remittee" men make that remark, or at least something that sounded like it.

"Why, Amy!" said Miss Alpha, with an amused smile growing around her mouth—but she took the little wrinkled hand and shook it cordially, guessing at once the reason of this funny masquerading.

"You are very welcome, my dear; and I hope you will have a nice time."

And then Miss Alpha rang the bell to call the school to order. It was not easily done, for the scholars were all giggling and chuckling and whispering together. Amy was sure there must have been some great fun out of doors, and almost wished she had postponed her visit to the school so that she might have enjoyed her share of it.

Miss Alpha waited a minute, and then said, "Now children, as I have company this afternoon, I want you to be very quiet and get through your lessons as quickly as possible. Afterwards I will see what I can do to entertain you all." Wonderful Miss Alpha! There was something in her voice and face that *made* them quiet, and turned their gaze from Amy to their books and slates. In three minutes

How Amy Visited The School.

they were all at work. Then Miss Alpha, turning to the little girl, said in the most matter-of-fact way, "You must enter your name in the visitor's book if you please, my dear."

Little Amy drew off her glove—it was very easily done—and with a sense of great importance, took the pen which Miss Alpha offered. She could print all the alphabet, and make a very respectable b-o-y, c-a-t, and r-a-t; but the g-i-r-l always appeared to have the rheumatism, and her h-o-u-s-e was a very tumble-down affair indeed. But this enormous book on the teacher's desk filled with various styles of "real writing"—another one of Amy's ambitions—this was quite a different thing from her slate and pencil performances. She looked with dismay at the page before her. Did visitors always *have* to do it? Then surely it was not such a nice thing to be a visitor as she had imagined. How she did long just then to be in her little yellow chair again, down with the scholars who looked very comfortable and happy. But kind Miss Alpha came to her help in a few minutes, as she had intended to all the time. "I'll write your name myself," she said cheerily, "it does not make much difference," and to Amy's delight she saw herself inscribed as, "Miss Amelia Brinkerhoff" in the book with the "remittee men."

How Amy Visited The School.

"Would you like to hear this lesson, Amy?" Miss Alpha said briskly, handing her a book. Now this was a privilege she had always specially coveted — to sit on the platform and give out the words, instead of in the class and missing them, as poor Amy generally did—that would be delightful indeed! But she was ready to cry when she saw the long words which she could not pronounce. Really, life — at any rate a visitor's life — had terrible responsibilities! She had never known it before. The tears were all ready to fall from the big blue eyes, when the teacher said, "I think perhaps I had better hear them, as I can hurry them up," and with a swift little kiss on the child's forehead, she took the book from her, and called up the class.

Then when the lessons were all finished, the scholars had *such* a good time — for Miss Alpha always kept her promises. She played a wonderful tune on the piano, and the children marched, sang, and clapped their hands to the music till little Amy was quite beside herself with delight, and called out loud, though she thought she was speaking to herself, "Oh, dear, I just wish I could do it too!" Miss Alpha smiled back at her — nobody else had heard her, they were making so much noise. "Not to-day, dear; visitors never do, you know."

How Amy Visited The School.

When school was out, and the children were running and shouting on the play-ground, Miss Alpha took Amy on her lap and kissed her heartily. "I hope you have had a pleasant time this afternoon," she said.

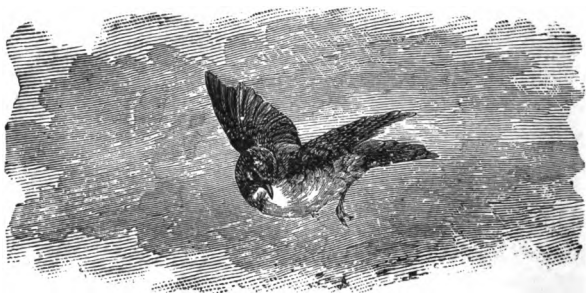
"Yes'm," said the little visitor, gravely, "but — these clothes are very plaguesome, and I did want to march, too! I guess I'll wait till I'm bigger next time."

"I would, dear, if I were you. Grown folks don't have as good a time as the little folks. They have more to do and to think about. When you grow up, these nice clothes will fit you better. You are so warm and tired, you must let me take them off, and see how much better you will feel with only your own pretty dress, which I see you have on under these things."

Amy was really tired with the excitement of the afternoon. Miss Alpha said very little, but took the extra "raiments" over her arm, pinned a veil over the little sunny head with its fuzzy French twist, and hand in hand, the teacher and her guest walked to Amy's home. Miss Alpha and Mrs. Brinkerhoff had a little explanation and a hearty laugh, while Amy, hungry as well as tired, for she had neglected her luncheon, ran down-stairs to get something to eat.

How Amy Visited The School.

"I had a *really* nice time, mamma," she explained when her mother undressed her that night, "but — but I guess I won't be a visitor again, because all the boys and girls had a nicer time than me, and Mrs. Alpha says she wouldn't, either, because there's a space for everything and everything is out of its space," which was not perhaps, exactly what Miss Alpha *did* say in her homeward walk with little Amy.



+ THE TRUE STORY OF BETSEY PRIG.

BETSEY PRIG lived at Hull's Cove on the island of Mt. Desert. The scenery around her home was beautiful, and crowds of strangers came every summer to praise the sea which sparkled at her feet, and to roam over the mountains that towered far above her head. But Betsey Prig cared nothing for scenery. She devoted all her time and thought to getting a living for herself and children.

Fortunately she had a little house, and it did not cost her much to clothe them, though they could not

The True Story Of Betsey Prig.

be blamed if sometimes when their toes were frost-bitten in the winter they asked her for better shoes and stockings.

But Betsey had a way of telling them if they had not been standing about idle their toes would not have had time to freeze. Hers never had when she was their age.

Times have been hard at Mt. Desert lately, as they have everywhere, and Betsey has found it difficult to get her great family enough to eat. She has scraped together all sorts of dishes, some of which they liked and some they left untouched until hunger drove them to eat. Clams, flounders, even the detested sculpins, that family had to consume; and as they grew fat, Betsey ceased not to tell her friends that it was all nonsense being so particular with children — one thing would do as well as another if they were properly brought up. So when she chanced one day to capture a little snake, as green as the sweet grass that grows at Hull's Cove, and as changeable as the treacherous waters of Frenchman's Bay, she ordered her family to devour it. But they rebelled; go hungry they could, eat snake they would not. Then Betsey, to carry out her notion that one thing was as good as another, tried to swallow it herself. Even she found the head slightly objectionable, so she deftly turned

The True Story Of Betsey Prig.

her dainty morsel, began at the tail, and down it slipped.

A neighbor who saw Betsey thus prove herself superior to circumstances, described the scene admiringly to her son Cally. He said if his mother had not seen it with her own eyes, he would not have believed it.

"Well," answered Mrs. Hamor, "I caught a green snake this very morning, and it is under the door-step now ; let us take it down to Betsey, and you can see her eat it."

So Cally poked out the little reptile, put him on a shingle, and they went to Betsey's modest house. She thanked them, and said "Certainly, she should be glad of it." Then she called the children in from the shore to their supper ; and that they might be duly influenced by the example, swallowed it as she sat in her place at the head of the table. But this time she began at the tail. Cally said he should have to believe it, but he knew one thing ; he never would eat another egg Betsey Prig laid as long as he lived ; for Betsey Prig is a hen.

† WHAT JANET DID WITH HER CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

WHEN Janet awoke on Christmas morning and saw her stocking, which had been placed most invitingly beside the chimney the night before, hanging as limp and apparently as empty as at the moment of leaving it there, she was not a little astonished as well as grieved at the thought that Santa Claus had passed her by.

This was not strange, for such a thing had never happened before ; but after rubbing her eyes to make sure of being awake, she looked again and was so positive it had occurred now, notwithstanding there was no reason to expect it, that when she arose to prepare for breakfast she did not take the pains to so much as peep into her stocking to verify her surmises.

And there is no telling when she would have done

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

so had not her pride whispered, as she was about to leave the room, that it would be well to put the empty stocking out of sight, and thus hide from others the evidence of her disappointment.

But the moment she laid her hand upon it for this purpose she discovered that she had been laboring under a great mistake. It was not empty. Concealed in a fold of the upper part was a sealed envelope directed to Miss Janet Dunstan, and beside it a neat package wrapped in tissue-paper which, when unrolled, she found to contain five ten-dollar bills !

What could it mean? Could so much money be really hers?

For a little while Janet was too much bewildered to think of the note in her hand as a probable explanation, but presently she caught sight of it, and with a little laugh at her own stupidity she opened it and found in Grandpa's hand-writing the quaintest, queerest epistle it had ever been hers to receive.

It began with "Respected Granddaughter," and then with a profusion of big words and complimentary phrases, went on to relate how a number of her worshipful friends, consisting of father, mother, uncle Tim, grandma and himself had gathered themselves together at an appointed place to deliberate upon the matter of Christmas gifts ; and being thus in "sol-

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

emn conclave assembled " that which should be done for her had received due attention, and it had been the unanimous decision in view of the fact of her having attained the dignity of fifteen years, that it was time to cease filling her stockings with toys and confections ; and, as it proved somewhat difficult to decide what other offerings might be most acceptable, they had finally come to the conclusion to act upon a suggestion made by uncle Tim, which was to give nothing but money, with which she could procure such things as would best suit her taste : therefore, in the accompanying package she would please find fifty dollars — ten dollars from each ; and hoping this would prove entirely satisfactory, he had the honor to subscribe himself her humble servant, etc., etc., etc.

Janet laughed. Knowing well grandpa's propensity for joking she saw the sly fun with which all these stilted phrases had been indited ; but when she again looked upon the money in her hand, her eyes filled with tears at the thought of the confidence in her, on the part of her relatives, which so generous a gift signified.

For none of them were wealthy, although in fairly comfortable circumstances, and she knew so large an amount of money would never have been placed at

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

her disposal had they not been tolerably sure that it would not be foolishly expended. And, then and there, she resolved they should see that their confidence had not been misplaced. Not one dollar would she use until there had been discovered some good purpose to which the whole could be devoted.

But the discovering of such a purpose proved more difficult than was anticipated ; partly, because she knew without being told, that it was not expected the money would be used for clothing or for any of those necessary things such as her parents had been in the habit of providing ; and she labored under a great disinclination to ask advice in the matter, having an instinctive feeling that the money was given her as a sort of test, which stimulated her to be equal to the emergency alone.

A week elapsed, and the opening day of the winter term of school arrived with the question no nearer a settlement than on Christmas morning, except that she had come to the determination to find, if possible, some method of investing her money, by which, while serving some useful purpose to others as well as herself, it should be made to yield something of interest in return.

This denoted both a benevolent and practical turn of mind ; and as if only waiting such a conclusion, a

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

plan whereby this possibly might all be accomplished was that day suggested to her in a remark made by one of her school-mates which she chanced to overhear.

"Oh, how I wish," said one little girl to another, "some one here would keep books to lend as they do in cities. My auntie writes she has the reading of all the books she desires by simply paying two cents a day for their use."

Janet started as the thought flashed across her mind that, perhaps, here was something she could do; and she wondered how many books fifty dollars would buy, and if she would be capable of managing a circulating library of this kind.

The more she thought about it the more pleasing seemed the idea; and when Saturday came, bringing a respite from school duties, as was her wont with all matters of importance, she went to talk it over with grandpa and get his opinion.

Without preamble or delay, waiting only to exchange greetings, she plunged directly into her subject by saying:

"Grandpa, I have decided that I would like to open a circulating library with my money. Do you think I have enough?"

Evidently grandpa was not a little surprised, as well

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

as amused, for he seemed for a moment to be struggling between a desire to both whistle and laugh, although he actually did neither ; but, giving Janet a quizzical look over his spectacles he said :

“Oho ! and so you propose to devote your means to charitable purposes, do you ?”

“No, I don’t mean to do anything of the kind,” answered Janet ; “I propose to have pay for lending my books.”

Then grandpa did laugh and whistle too. But Janet did not allow herself to be disturbed, well knowing that she was sure of his sympathy and attention when he should have his laugh out ; and directly, as she expected, he became quite grave, and asked her what had put such an idea into her head.

Then as she was confident he would, he listened most kindly while she told him all that had been in her mind from the moment of receiving her gift, and of how the little girl’s remark had seemed to indicate a way by which she could do not only that which she so much desired, but also to gratify a wish she [had herself often felt — a wish for more fresh reading matter than it had been at all times convenient to procure. For she thought, could she purchase a small number of volumes and lend them in the manner suggested, that perhaps these might yield a

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

sufficient return to enable her to get such others as might from time to time be desired.

A look of pleased interest gradually stole over grandpa's face as Janet told her plan, and when she had finished he took his spectacles in his hand, and while balancing them on his forefinger, remarked :

"Why, Janet, you bid fair to become a capital business woman ! This is not a bad project for a fifteen-year-old head ! "

"But what do you think, grandpa ? — can I make it work ? " queried Janet impatiently, too intent upon her purpose to care for compliments.

Grandpa deliberated a few moments and then replied :

"Yes, Janet, I believe your idea is a practicable one, providing you are willing to begin in a small way."

This Janet expected as a matter of course, for she well knew fifty dollars could not be made to buy a great number of books ; but thinking there might be more in grandpa's remark than appeared, she asked him to explain.

"Why," said he, "inasmuch as your means will not admit of many books, it seems to me that it would be advisable to restrict the variety to only such as may be suited to a single class of readers ; for instance, to young people like yourself."

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

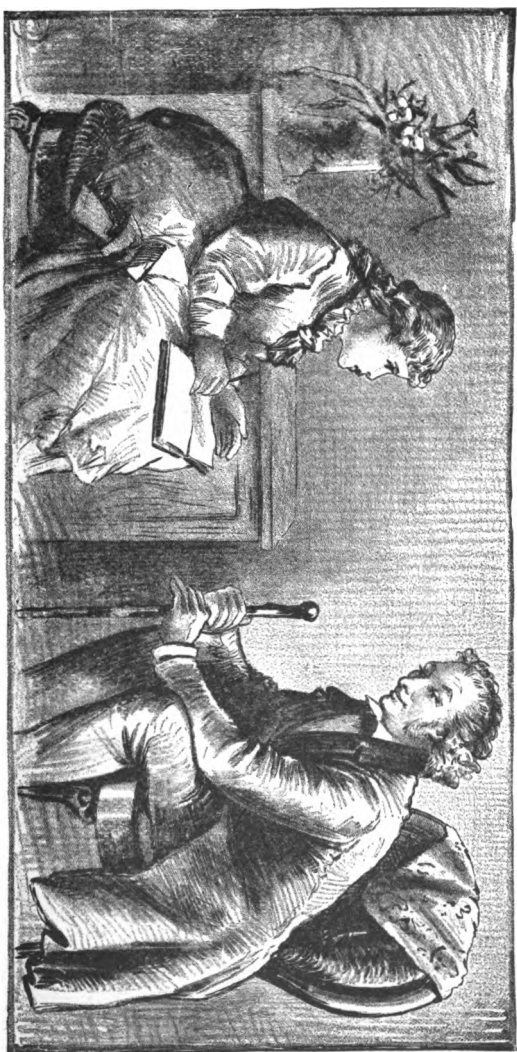
Janet's eyes sparkled as she clapped her hands and said :

"I like that. So it shall be ; and we will call it the Boys' and Girls' Library."

The project approved and a name chosen, what further remained to be done seemed comparatively easy. At least so Janet thought ; for grandpa, thoroughly pleased with the idea, very cheerfully offered to assume the entire care of bringing the library into working order, after which it was understood the whole management would rest upon Janet.

It would occupy too much space to enter into all the details of how this was finally brought about — of the letters written to distant booksellers and the answers received ; of the catalogues he and Janet looked over together, and their discussions in regard to the merits of different authors — therefore we will omit all this and come at once to the completed work, as it stood when ready to hand over to Janet's charge.

At first father and mother had been somewhat doubtful of the scheme ; but upon learning that it met with grandpa's approval they concluded to allow it a fair trial. They saw that to insure the harmonious working of the library, there were two important things to be secured at the outset : That patrons should have perfect freedom to come and go, and



GRANDPA HIGHLY APPROVES OF JANET.

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

still not be allowed to intrude upon the quiet or privacy of the household ; and with this end in view they caused a tiny room at the end of the hall, which had an outside door of its own, to be fitted up and set apart for the exclusive use of the library.

Across one side of the room was placed a row of low shelves where, after being carefully numbered, the books were neatly arranged, but leaving when all was done considerable unoccupied space which, grandpa said, was for growth should the venture prove a success.

Before the window stood a small table holding pens, ink, and record-book, with which, and two chairs, the furniture of the room was complete.

The main feature of the room, of course, was the books ; and, considering that these had all come before the public long after grandpa had ceased to be personally interested in youthful literature, it seemed almost a mystery how he had been able to make his selections with such admirable taste and judgment. But this was soon accounted for by the fact that he had been governed in his choice by the standing of publishing houses and the approval of critics of established taste and ability. Only such as were thus vouched for were allowed a place in the collection. When all were shelved there were thirty-

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

five volumes in strong cloth covers, including stories for both boys and girls, biographies, travels, etc., and one which would be classed under no general head, bearing the funny title "Behaving."

These cost on an average \$1.20 each, and were all the works of standard authors, such as Mrs. Whitney, Miss Muloch, Miss Alcott, Miss Yonge, Miss Jewett, T. B. Aldrich, J. T. Trowbridge, with others of equal merit. One novel feature of this library must not be omitted, which was a tiny microscope intended to accompany a book entitled, "Evenings with the Microscope," indicating that grandpa meant this library to be a means of profit as well as pleasure to the young people of the village.

The cost of the books and microscope amounted to forty-four dollars, leaving six dollars, which were invested in a subscription to two monthly magazines, one a four-dollar monthly, suited to mature minds, and one copy of *WIDE AWAKE*, which took the remaining two. The magazines were Janet's own suggestions, in order that every young person should be sure to find in the library something to please the individual taste.

Grandpa thought it advisable to burden the working of the library with as few rules as possible, and after careful deliberation he decided upon three

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

which, if strictly adhered to, he thought would be quite sufficient.

First, The library was to be open to the public on three days of each week between the hours of four and six, P.M., *and at no other time*. Not even for the accommodation of some special friend were books to be either taken from or returned to the library at irregular hours.

Second, Borrowers of books were to pay for their use at the rate of two cents per day; and were to make good any damage received at their hands; and last but by no means least, no running accounts were to be allowed. Every book was to be paid for when returned, otherwise the delinquent person was to be denied another until the indebtedness was cancelled.

Grandpa's idea in this was not so much to prevent loss, as to instil into the minds of Janet and her friends correct business habits.

He reasoned, very correctly, that if a person contracted the habit of incurring debt in youth it would be very likely to follow him through life; therefore, even in so small a matter as this he thought it wisest and best to be careful and exact.

Everything being in readiness, Janet announced her project by distributing among her schoolmates a

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

few neatly written notices, containing a statement of her plan of lending books, and the rules to be observed, and then in a few courteous words invited patronage.

Such a commotion as this simple announcement created! The questions and explanations which arose from all sides were something to be remembered: "Whatever had made her think of such a thing? Could any one have a book that wished? and must every one pay? Surely she would make exceptions in favor of her dearest, dearest friends?" until poor Janet was fairly bewildered.

But she finally succeeded in making them understand all about it, and why it would be necessary to conduct the library with strict impartiality by showing them how unjust it would be to favor one above another.

Two or three of her most intimate friends were at first a little inclined to feel themselves personally aggrieved at this; but their better judgment soon convinced them of their error, and on the day of opening these were the very first to present themselves.

The eagerness with which others followed, and the number of books taken on this day proved that Janet's venture had met with sufficient favor to warrant its success.

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

And Janet proved a good manager, too. When the hour for opening the library arrived, she took her place by the table before the open record-book, and as fast as each one made a choice of a book she wrote under the proper date its number and the name of the taker, leaving on the same line a blank space where the date of return, and amount received for use, was to be daily recorded.

Both magazines and fully two-thirds of the books were taken on this first day; but, as was to be expected, this was rather above the average on succeeding days. Still the demand for books continued fair throughout the winter, and also through the spring and summer months, one set of readers succeeding another until there was scarcely a house in the village where one or more books from Janet's little library had not found its way.

And wherever they went they carried a good influence with them, one which tarried and before long became manifest in several different ways. For, besides being bright and interesting, affording entertainment of a high order, there was not one which did not teach some useful lesson, inculcate some pure and noble sentiment, or show the beauty and desirability of brave and unselfish purposes.

And so these few good books became a refining

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

and inspiring element in the young society of this retired, humdrum little village, such as had never been felt there before, and from which the young people profited to a surprising degree.

Throughout the entire school this good influence was especially felt, helping the boys to grow more manly and courteous, the girls to become gentle and more attentive to their studies, while yet sacrificing nothing of their accustomed jollity but its rudeness and carelessness.

The boys and girls were not, to all appearances, conscious of the change in themselves, nor had they been would many have recognized its source ; but their elders were not slow to discover the little leaven at work in their midst, nor to benefit by the suggestion of a duty owed to themselves and families which this contained, as the unusual number of subscribers to some of our best periodical literature the following year amply testified.

As the year was about drawing to a close, grandpa looked over Janet's record-book to ascertain what had been the measure of the pecuniary reward of the enterprise ; and this is what he learned : The different patrons of the library numbered nearly one hundred, a few having read every one of the books, while others had taken not more than one or two.

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

But of the thirty-five books each and every one had been out several times, and as some had proved greater favorites than others, grandpa made a general average of time upon the whole of *one hundred days each* — equal to thirty-five hundred days — which, at two cents per day, had brought a return of seventy dollars. The magazines, evidently, had been the greatest favorites of all, as the record showed that they had been out fully three-fourths of the time, and had earned a trifle over ten dollars.

This, added to the earnings of the bound books, made the nice sum of eighty dollars in something less than one year — thirty dollars over and above the original investment — while not one book was lost, nor one so badly worn that it would not do good service some time longer.

To say that grandpa was delighted at this showing would be but a feeble expression of his feelings ; and when the facts in regard to the success of her undertaking were laid before Janet's friends, they were so well pleased that their united judgment was in favor of a continuance of the work, advising that she withdraw the thirty dollars profit and put this amount out on interest, while the original sum should be re-invested in new books.

This was quite in accordance with her own wishes ;

What Janet did with her Christmas Present.

and as the year had been prolific of cheap editions of old and standard works, as well as of many new ones, she was enabled to increase her stock to over one hundred choice volumes suited to both old and young readers, naturally increasing the number of her patrons and adding greatly to the popularity of the little library. And although only about one-fourth of the second year has elapsed, the people of the village are already beginning to look upon Janet's library as one of the permanent and praiseworthy institutions of the town, many talking confidently of a time in the near future when it shall comprise many hundreds of volumes, and be no longer "the Little Library."

How Elsie Hurried The Spring.

+ HOW ELSIE HURRIED THE SPRING

IT seemed as if no winter had ever been quite so long before. The sun had shone so brightly for two days that Elsie had begun to think of spring; but now a great snow-storm came, covering up the wintergreen lot fence deep, and making the roads impassable to anything but ox-teams. To be sure there had been beautiful sleigh-rides, and Saturdays full of sliding down hill, all as well appreciated by Elsie as by her brothers; but even they had grown a little tired of it all, and wished the skating would come back. As for Elsie, she longed for spring as she had never done before "in all her whole life," she said.

Early in February there came a great thaw. The melted snow poured in small rivers down the streets, and, after days and days of it, small spots of bare

How Elsie Hurried The Spring.

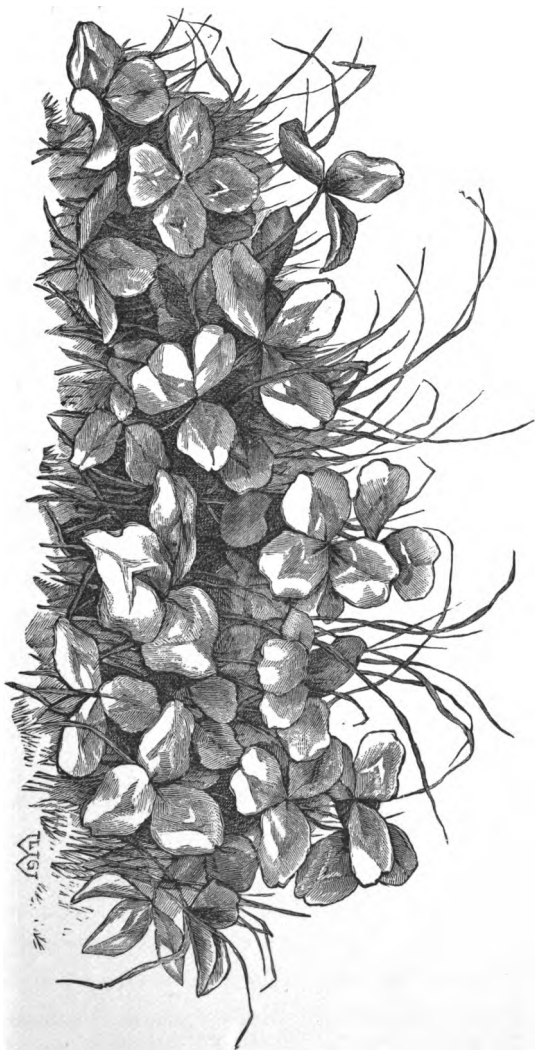
ground began to appear in the sunniest places. Fred was jubilant. By and by it would freeze up again, and then what skating there would be! Edgar sympathized warmly in the joy of his older and well-practised brother, although he had never stood on skates in his life. But Santa Claus had brought him a pair this very Christmas, and now, at last, he would have a chance to try them.

But Elsie's joy was for another reason. How *could* it be winter again with the sun shining so warm, and the lilac-buds already beginning to swell? She had forgotten all about the month of March, and April, too; as for that matter. All the spring-feeling stirred her blood, and she went out determined to find something fresh and sweet.

It was a long search and, but for the never failing partridge-berry vines, and moss, would have been a vain one. The ferns, though green at first sight, were no longer perfect; and even the clover, that had stood up so bravely against the November storms, lay flat and apparently dead. It looked as if an iron weight had pressed it down.

But, stooping to stroke one forlorn little bud, Elsie noticed that the small leaves in the middle, which had been partly hidden by the large lifeless ones, were green and fresh and alive enough to seem

WAKING UP.



How Elsie Hurried The Spring.

to feel her gentle touch. She thought that minute what she would do. Dear little sturdy clover! It should go home with her and be warm.

So she took out her knife and began to pry up the edges of the flat little patch, and then, reaching its roots, she worked hard. But it was of no use. Who would have believed such tender stems sprang from such a deep and hardy foundation!

She hurried home and came back with her trowel. Even then it was a difficult task, and she wished she had brought Fred and a spade. But at last she conquered and carried her treasure home. Then she trimmed it of its long sprawling roots as much as she dared, cut off the dead leaves, and pulled out the poor little last-year grasses that were woven in and out and laid it on a large plate. The ragged edges she covered and filled in with moss from her basket, till it all looked like a little, low, green hill. Then she sprinkled it with warm water, and set it on the small corner table which she moved out before the south window.

In one hour it seemed to begin to grow! It seemed to leap right up in the sunshine. How she watched it and made all the family watch it too! The boys were too busy with their skating — for the world had frozen up again — to really care about it,

How Elsie Hurried The Spring.

and Elsie was too busy with her clover to care that spring seemed again far away. In two days each little leaf was large enough to go to sleep at night in the clover's own pretty way; and in one week that plate was a green, lovely clover bed, with long spires of grass shooting up through it here and there.

The next warm day was Washington's birthday, and so a holiday. Elsie got Fred so interested that he took a spade, and started off with her for a guide to hunt for more. An old, banished tea-tray she had come across, had put a grand idea into her head. Even Edgar, who was called "the judge" for his serious way of pondering and planning, began to talk of a vast hot-bed arrangement for next winter, by which his rabbits could literally live in clover.

"But you must remember," Elsie said, "that your clover must be frozen first."

She had read somewhere, how all plants must have a rest sometime during the year, and those belonging to our cold climate a thorough freezing before they can start into life again.

This time seven great clover clumps came home to Elsie's sunny window. "Just as many as Ralph was years old," she said to the little fellow who stood watching her with big blue eyes as she worked.

How Elsie Hurried The Spring.

In another week the little table was quite hidden under a mass of luxuriant green.

Now Elsie, and her brothers, too, began to learn



GOING TO SLEEP.

how varied and beautiful a leaf is, one of the very commonest of all God's wonderful creations. One tuft was of a color almost like sunshine itself, with long narrow leaves ; another of a deep blue-green,

How Elsie Hurried The Spring.

its leaves broader, almost a perfect oval ; another a brilliant grass-green but very small, with its three leaves so rounded at their base as to fit closely together and seem like a single leaf. And all, of every shape and shade, had the same inverted point, and delicate veining, and the soft white mark — that curious triangle in each of the three leaflets which, looking carefully, Fred discovered to be only a single part of one larger triangle ; and this was enclosed in a third still larger triangle, formed by the general outline of the whole triple leaf.

Grasses of many kinds sprang up in the little bed ; even two pale eyebrights peeped out one morning with a surprised look. And one day — O, happy discovery ! — there was a four-leaved clover.

When spring came, the *real* spring, with its buds and birds, Elsie was fairly astonished. She had forgotten to watch for it, her clover friends had so absorbed her thoughts and satisfied her heart. She took them out and laid them back in the rich soil of the field they came from ; for they, like human beings, felt the new air and wanted more freedom than in-doors could give.

And all the summer long she was finding out more of their sweet ways. How they kept their faces always turned toward the sun ; how, in times of

How Elsie Hurried The Spring.

drouth, they never lost their freshness ; and then, after the summer was gone, how they lingered past the fall even, some of them into the frost and storm of winter. It came at last to seem to Elsie as if nothing else that grew was quite so sweet, and dear, and homelike as clover.

A great while after, she put some of her love for them into this little

CLOVER-SONG.

“ Wake ! ” said the sun, looking out at the world ;
And the mist from the meadows broke,
And blossoms and leaves felt a thrill of life,
And from sleep at his summons woke.
Dewy wild-roses looked everywhere,
At the clouds, and the birds, and the trees ;
Daisies went waving all ways, glad things !
And buttercups basked at their ease.
All the fields over,
Nought but the clover
Turned to her lover —
True little clover leaves, straight to the sun.

Higher and higher he climbed the sky,
Drinking the roses’ dew —
Sweet, frail roses ! they drooped, then fell,
And faint were all things that grew.
But the calm little clover leaves turned and turned,
With the great sun keeping pace ;
And now each one in the fervid noon,
Lifted its trusting face,

How Elsie Hurried The Spring.

All the fields over,
Only the clover
Followed her lover —
True little clover looked straight at the sun.

Slowly, slowly, the sun went down
Over the hills so sweet ;
Slowly followed the clover leaves,
Ever his face to meet .
Down through the waiting gold and red
As at last he sinks from sight,
Softly they drop their faces low,
In loving, mute good-night.
All the fields over,
Sleeps little clover,
Missing her lover —
True little clover, to wake for the sun.

